

Application No. 09/909,934

Filed: July 20, 2001

TC Art Unit: 2827

Confirmation No.: 2402

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) comprising;

a plurality of integrated circuit areas (11), each of said plurality of integrated circuit areas having a die pad (12) and a plurality of leads ; and

a peripheral pad (14) surrounding said plurality of integrated circuit areas,

said peripheral pad (14) being provided with a plurality of stress-relief means (15).

2. (Currently Amended) A stress-free lead frame (1) comprising;

a plurality of integrated circuit areas (11), each of said plurality of integrated circuit areas having a die pad (12) and a plurality of leads (13); and

a peripheral pad (14) surrounding said plurality of integrated circuit areas, \_\_\_\_\_ said peripheral pad (14) being provided with a plurality of interlocking means (16).

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3. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said plurality of stress-relief means (15) comprises holes and slots, each hole being a non-elongated opening and each slot being an elongated opening.

4. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said holes and slots are arranged in multiple rows.

5. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 2 wherein each of said interlocking means (16) comprises a plurality of slots, each slot being an elongated opening.

6. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 4 wherein said holes and slots are arranged side by side at equal intervals.

7. (Previously Presented) A stress-free lead frame (1) as claimed in Claim 5 wherein said holes and slots are arranged side by side at equal intervals.